

DOTAGE.

A

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POEM.

Written in Imitation of Mr. DRYDEN's Style.

*Quid fieri non posse putes, si jungitur ulla
Ursidio? ————— Juv.*



L O N D O N :

Printed by J. Leake, in the YEAR, 1717.

DOTAGE.

A

POEM.

Written in Imitation of Mr. Dryden's Style.

Printed by J. Smith, at the Sign of the Gun, in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1717.



LONDON.

Printed by J. Smith, in the Year 1717.

THE PREFACE.



THE following POEM was wrote for the Service of a Young Gentleman, whose Father, Dying, left him to the Care of a Rich Uncle, who bred him as his own Son, and promis'd he should succeed him in his Estate. The Old Gentleman falling in Love with a very Young Woman, his Kinsman justly apprehends the Danger of his Inheritance, in Case of such a Marriage; which he endeavours to prevent, by setting forth the Inconveniencies which inevitably attend so vast a Disproportion in Age, &c.

I am conscious that I have not handled this Subject so well as my polite Readers might expect; and, tho' I might say more, in my Excuse, I shall only acquaint them, that I was Ill when I wrote it; and am but Recovering a severe Fit of Sickness now 'tis call'd for to the Press. This, I hope, may be sufficient to prevail with a judicious Man to excuse, as well as he can, what his Judgment will not suffer him to approve, or defend. As to the Critiques, they are a Set of Men that give me very little Pain, because they will never approve, even, a Work of Merit.

— quia nil rectum, nisi quod placuit sibi ducunt:
Hor.

Else why should the Immortal A—— be pull'd to pieces, in a Work which, yet, never could be match'd, for its Perfection? And

— Sibi

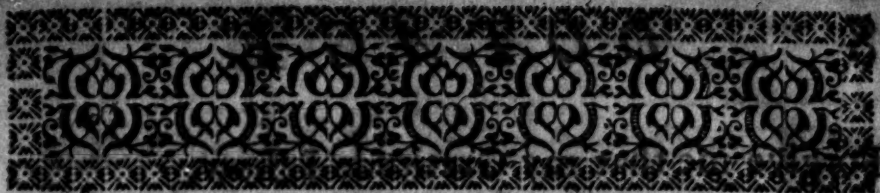
The PREFACE.

Sibi quivis
Speret idem, sudet multum, frustra que laboret,
Aulus idem. Hor.

But this Trifle will, I hope, be below their Notice; and, as I never intended to build a Character upon it, all I desire, is, that it may not prepossess the Reader, in Prejudice of any Thing I may, hereafter, communicate to the Publique. If it should chance to fall under the View of the fair Sex, I hope they will not accuse me of too great Liberty, in a Description, where, if it is not so necessary, it's, at least, excusable. Tho' this Piece was not wrote, directly, for them, I have, with the utmost Care, avoided all obscene, and, I hope, immodest Expressions; and if they can make any Use of it to their Advantage, I shall be pleas'd. If my Reflections seem too General, the Case is Particular, and so the Exception holds good. I would not be understood to Bar Fifty-five the little Remains of the Pleasures of Matrimony: But, I think, in such a Marriage, the Bride ought to be Forty-five, at least. Unnatural Disproportions are, too often, fatal to both Parties. I am told the following Trifle is charg'd upon a worthy Author, of my Acquaintance, who, I am sure, never saw it: But I believe him a better Man than to encourage the Report; and a better Judge than to think any Thing it contains worth contending for. But, if the Person that threw the Scandal upon him, thinks it worth his Acceptance, 'tis at his Service; let him take it, and welcome; only allowing the small Profit of its Publication to

His Humble Servant,

The AUTHOR.



And Risque my Fortune by my Care of you:

DOTAGE.

IS there, in Friendship, yet, a dearer Name,
Than what, by Blood, we've mutual Right
[to claim?

What shall I call you? Father! Brother! Friend!

To whom I this unpolish'd Letter send?

These Appellations, all, too weak will prove,

To shew my Duty, or express my Love.

You are the only Parent I have, left,

For I of others am, by Heav'n, bereft:

My early Steps were guided by your Care,

And your Commands my greatest Precepts were:

The

Forgive

Forgive me that my Gratitude I show,

And Risque my Fortune by my Care of you :

'Tis Filial Duty makes me you advise

To shun the Danger, and continue wise :

Then deign, for once, with Patience to attend,

Since, on your Conduct, all my Hopes depend.

'Tis not without the utmost Grief and Shame,

I hear, what I must ever blush to name !

Oh ! how shall I the Fatal Cause express,

That Robs my dearest Friend of Happiness ?

But, to conceal my Knowledge, would be vain,

In it I should but trifle with my Pain ;

And justly meet your Anger and Disdain.

Forgive

The

The common Talk, about this Tatling Town,
 Is that, of late, you're mighty Am'rous grown :
 That God-like Reason, now, no more can shine,
 But, with your Strength, your Vertues, too, de-
 [cline :
 That you, at Fifty-five, a Slave, begin
 To Glory in Love's soft Tyrannick Chain :
 And, Fair *Maria*, with one single Frown,
 Can tumble all your Resolutions down.

Well may her Sex's Frailty make her vain,
 While you a Subject to her Charms remain !
 Well may she Act the mighty Tyrant's Part,
 Since She, alone, can Captivate your Heart !
 Well may she boast the Power of her Eyes,
 Since, from his Cell, they make an Anch'rite rise,
 And kindle Youthful Fires in him who daily dies !

B

True,

TO

D O T A G E

True, she is wond'rous Fair, and Young and
[Gay;
Delights in Company, and Balls and Play :

Yet, all her artful Beauties ne'er have found
A Charm, to give my Youthful Heart a Wound :

And you, in Marriage, must unhappy be ;

So ill, do Age and Infancy agree.

When you the latest Office came to pay,

My tender Father on his Death-bed lay ;

You prest his Hand, and drop'd a parting Tear,

Then vow'd, if he'd commit me to your Care,

I should your Favour, and your Fortune Share.

Pleas'd with the Promise, he resign'd his Breath,

And calmly sunk into the Arms of Death.

What,

What, are those Sacred Invocations past?
Are Oaths not binding? Vows not made to last?

Now you, grown Old, fondly indulge a Flame,
Which hurries on my Ruin, and your Shame;
And all my Wishes, all my Hopes are crost,
And you, by this Mistake, for ever lost.

Shipwreck'd by Fortune, let me sigh alone,
Rather than see you wretched, and undone.

How have you laugh'd at Love's Fantastick
[Toys,
As Trifles, for insipid Girls and Boys?

Now, for a Trifle, which you can't enjoy,
You Heav'n forsake, yourself and me destroy.
Oh! gentle Sir, forbear the dang'rous Chase,
Least I should grow undutiful and base.

What might not vig'rous Five-and-twenty do,
 To circumvent such Purposes in you?
 With artful Ardour imitate a Flame,
 And act those Joys which ought to want a Name?
 Rush to her Bed, and Revel in her Charms,
 Then leave her, ready Riff'd, to your Arms?

I could, in Exile, wander out my Life,
 Rather than see you Wed so young a Wife:
 Think on the Evils, Sir, which must betide
 The Freezing Husband, of a Melting Bride.

Remember *Malchos*, hear the fatal Tale,
 And let the Consequence, with you, prevail:
 How Old and Impotent, and Rich and Proud,
 Peevish, Infirm, Impertinent and Loud;

The

The Spring of Youthful Heat declin'd, and gone,
The Signs of Hoary Winter drawing on;
Mourning the many fair Occasions past,
He fondly Doats, and falls in Love at last.

To *Rosalinda* formal Vows are paid;
The Grave Old Man an aukward Spark was
[made;
No matter—the resolves—consents to Wed,
To take a sapless Dotard to her Bed,
Marries the Beauties of a fair Estate,
And so Cornutes his bald insipid Pate.

On fairer Objects she bestows her Charms,
And Youthful Moments spends in Youthful Arms:
Warm'd with the Dance, and Ripen'd for the
[Sport,
She yields as Youth and Vigour make their Court;
Nor

Nor mourns for what the Cuckold cannot do,
 But brings him Children by——the L——d knows
 [who!
 And now the rigid Sot, suspicious grown,
 Believes he keeps a Wife for half the Town.

To whom can jealous he for Counsel fly?
 For Love, there ne'er was found a Remedy:
 Witness the Swains below, the Gods on high.
 For when its Fire inflames a Female Heart,
 If ill return'd, each Object shares a Part.
 Averse to him who did the Fancy cheat,
 At best, it will but languishingly burn;
 Or wand'ring, Fuel for its Flame to meet,
 'Twill quite expire, or to fierce Hatred turn.

Or,

Or, if she Weds the Man she ne'er could Love,
'Tis odds, but she'll a very Wand'rer prove.

Still warm'd by many, oft by each posselt,
Each claims a Share in the fair faithless Breast,
And robs the first Deceiver of his Rest.

Rarely, in Physick, does this Maxim miss,
The Cause remov'd, th' Effects, of course, will
But this, to *Malchos*, difficult did prove;
Then he must from the Cause, himself remove.

Agreed, at last, a lonely Country-Seat,
A little Farm was thought a safe Retreat,
Where Beaux, with Ladies, scarce could hope to
Strait to the Country, he, with speed removes,
To barr his wanton Wife, her guilty Loves:

But,

But, change of Place can never change the Mind
 Of Woman, once so viciously enclin'd;
 Deaf to Remorse, and to all Vertue, Blind.
 A lusty Labourer, who sweats for Bread
 Behind his Plow, now mounts the Cuckold's Bed;
 Staining the boasted Honours of his Blood,

He fills his Table with a spurious Brood.

(For, in a Case so desperate as this,
 Resentment brings Desire of Lawless Bliss,
 And Strength, the want of Breeding, well sup-

The Mother's Crimes, the Daughter's Soul, in-
 Early she enters on the wanton Trade:
 No sooner Woman, but commencing Whore,
 She multiplies, apace, the guilty Score.

And

And now, alas! born down with Age and
[Care,
In furly Speeches, he upbraids the Fair.

This New-born Evil does torment me more
Than all the Plagues, I ever felt, before.
You, for a Clown, have giv'n me endless Pain,
The World declares, I've Reason to complain,
[the Main.
And Earth, and Heav'n shall hear it eccho'd o'er

The Darts from those bright Eyes can wound no
[more,
They lost that Force when first you prov'd a
[Whore:
Each shining Grace, which, late, my Heart did
[move,
No more can light the languid Fire of Love;
But all your Beauties ineffectual prove.

When first you Charm'd my fond, admiring
[Sight,
No Form could shine more regularly bright:
'Twas a soft Scene of exquisite Delight!

Then, to the seeming Vertues of your Mind,

My Liberty I, foolishly, resign'd:

For, soon, to my eternal Woe, you prove

A fair Impostor, and encline to Rove.

Deluded, now, no more, by Love's false Glass,

I find you chang'd from what, I thought, you was;

And all your fading Charms do quite neglected

How vast a Jewel was your Chastity!

But, once being lost, it ne'er restor'd can be.

This Folly all your Beauties does deface;

You, by this Act, have Bastardiz'd my Race.

The Stain, in ours, is quickly wip'd away,

But, in your Sex, it will for ever Stay.

You

You Glory in those Crimes that lost your Fame,
 Fixing a foul Dishonour on my Name,
 And, all my future Days, devote to endless
 Curst Woman, so, did first Mankind betray,
 And, for a Trifle, fool'd her Soul away.

[Shame.]

These fruitless Labours, on the fair One, lost,
 And all Endeavours to reclaim her, crost;
 She, quite abandon'd to her Lust and Shame,
 Slighting her Marriage Vow, despising him,
 Nor blushing for her Guilt, makes quick Reply,
 Oh! wretched State——much better 'tis to die,
 Than thus, in Pain, with such a Wretch to live,
 Who bars those Pleasures he can never give.

C 2

Within

Within my Father's Hall, a Picture view,
 In all its Parts, it much resembles you ;
 The fam'd *Apelles* scarce could paint so true.
 With Aspect, Grave and Grim, a Wretch you see,
 To whom a Virgin humbly bows the Knee ;
 While plenteous Show'rs of *Nectar* 'round him fall :
 Tho' full himself, the Glutton gapes at all :
 But chides the thirsty Nymph, if she desires
 To drink, tho' quite parch'd up with hidden Fires.

When first I to your hated Bed was doom'd,
 (My Living Body with your Dead intomb'd.)
 You talk'd of Joys, in which the Soul would melt,
 And Raptures exquisite ! from you unfelt.
 Curst be the Hour I did your Wish fulfil,
 And thus became a Subject to your Will :
 But

But I'm of Age, and for myself will carve,

Nor, like a Vestal, will I kneel and starve.

Thus, tauntingly, she speaks him to his Face,

And makes him Witness of his own Disgrace.

All common Ways of Hatred they disdain,

Are never pleas'd, but with each other's Pain.

And sure, since *Adam* fell from *Eden*, first,

Never were Mortals more compleatly curst.

Oh wretched *Malchos*! may thy Fortune be

A Warning, to my dearest Friend and me:

Since, by thy own, thou slighted art, and scorn'd,

And, by a wanton Wife, despis'd and horn'd.

Such, Sir, may be your own unhappy Fate,

If not prevented e'er it be too late.

In

In vain, you'll wish to be, what you have been;

But Fifty-five, once Marry'd to Fifteen!

Unhappy Thought! it will your Peace destroy;

What, now, you long to taste, too soon will cloy;

For Youth with Youth can, only, reap the Joy.

But grant the Fair should faithful prove, and

'Tis owing to her Vertue, not to you.

She'll sigh, and languish, still, in soft Desire,

As youthful Bosoms burn with youthful Fire;

Coolness in Love, will endless Rage inspire.

Then, prompted by her Sex's native Pride,

She'll urge the Disappointments of a Bride:

Upbraid you with her Expectations, crost,

Of Youth and Charms, and Vertue, vainly boast,

Condemn'd to Impotence, to Pleasure lost.

While

While you, between the Sheets, uneasy lie,
 Curfing the tedious Night, desiring Day,
 Neglected as a lifeless Clod of Clay.

Restless your Bed, your Pillow full of Thorns,
 You'll Jealous grow, and rave at fancy'd Horns.

Such must, inevitably, be the Fate

Of those who wage the Am'rous War, too late.

Quite otherwise it will, for ever, fare,
 With ev'ry tender, youthful, well-match'd Pair.
 See *Licidas*, Brisk, Healthy, Gay and Strong;
 His *Leonora*, Beautiful and Young.

No Int'rest drew her to a sickly Bed,
 From whence the Nuptial Joy, long since, was
 Their Fortunes, and their Age proportion'd were;
 Equally fond, and, to each other, dear.

In

In lovely Pomp, the graceful Hero led
 The trembling Virgin, to the Bridal Bed.
 Conscious of Bliss, and eager with Desire,
 His glowing Cheeks express a youthful Fire!
 Whilst modest Blushes veil her Beautied Face,
 And heighten ev'ry Charm; and ev'ry Grace!
 Sweetly confus'd, as cannot be express'd!
 With Hope, and Fear, alternate, in her Breast:
 She Hopes, and Fears, she knows not what, nor
 Nor rolls, around the Room, her wand'ring Eye:
 Nor darts at him from whom these Tempests
 From him she waits her Happiness, or Doom.
 Who can describe the Raptures of that Night!
 Fierce Joys! soft Transports of extream Delight!

There, you might see, if strictly you will trace
 { Saturnia's Torch adorn'd the Marriage Feast,
 The charming Features, of each Infant's Face,
 Fair Venus, and her Son, the Triumph grac'd,
 The Mother's Beauty, and the Father's Grace,
 And great Apollo smil'd to see a Pair so blest!

The happy Pair, free from Domestick Strife,
 Full Fifteen Years, within her faithful Arms,
 Still comfortably drew the Load of Life.
 With Matrimonial Love, he 'as grac'd her
 [Joyne'd in such the mutual Flame:
 Whilst she each Beauty of her Sex transfers:
 Which, as it burns, will ever burn the same.
 Each Daughter, now, enjoys, what late was hers:

Who still remains, as rapid Time does glide,
 Each Day a Mistress, and each Night a Bride.
 Whilst yours a Temp'ral Purgatory is,

Here's all the joys of real Paradise.
 The tender Husband ne'er inclines to range;
 The Sparrows do, with Sparrows, of unite,
 'Twould be unhappy but to think a Change.
 And Doves their Fellows to the Grove invite,
 Repeated Love the Blessing ne'er destroys;
 To coo, and exercise, in soft Delight:
 But rears a Race of lovely Girls, and Boys.

They'll

D

There,

There, you might see, if strictly you will trace
 The charming Features, of each Infant's Face,
 The Mother's Beauty, and the Father's Grace.

The happy Pair, free from Domestick Strife,
 Still comfortably draw the Load of Life.

Nor can Enjoyment quench the mutual Flame :

Which, as it burns, will ever burn the same.

What Diff'rence 'twixt your wretched State
 Whilft yours a Temp'ral Purgatory is,

Here's all the Joys of real Paradise.

Tho' Sparrows do, with Sparrows, oft unite,

And Doves their Fellows to the Grove invite,

To cooe, and exercise, in soft Delight :

They'll

They'll fly the tow'ring Faulcon's fatal Rage:

No less a Foe, to Youth, is fordid Age.

Consider, Sir, your Race is well-nigh done;

The sinking Sands have little more to run,

[spun.

And the Third cuts the Thread Two fatal Sisters

If Nature, strong beyond all Hope, should give

One Child, you have so short a Time to live,

Th' imperfect feeble Creature must be left

To future Snubs, of Parents quite bereft :

For she who, ever, did detest the Tree,

Must, to the Scion, most unnat'ral be.

Poor Boy ! his Father thus remov'd, by Fate,

Must, now, be cheated of a fair Estate.

Your Wealth will serve her Fortune, but, to

[mend;

And she'll begin her Life, when yours shall end.

Forbear the vain Pursuit, your Troubles cease,
 Nor, to your Passion, sacrifice your Peace,
 Nor rob the Maid of Joy, yourself of Ease.
 The Aged Eagle moulting sits, and weeps,
 As down Time's Hill declining Nature creeps :
 He mourns the melancholly sad Decay,
 Till Instinct favourably shows the Way :
 Then whets his Beak, and strait revives, again,
 Lives o'er, in Youth, the Days he past in Pain :
 Thro' yielding Air he cleaves his mystick Way,
 And wantons with his Mate, in open Day.
 But you, in vain, may whet your Appetite,
 Most Dull to Love, and Dead to all Delight,
 You'll Sicken at the softer Scenes of Night
 Nature,

Nature, retreating to its little Cell,
 Will, shiv'ring, there, in Pristine Darkness
 Nor vig'rous, thro' each winding Channel, [dwell:
 To kindle up the circulating Mass, [pass,
 And, with a bright Vermillion, flush the Face.
 Hardly its wand'ring Heat it can impart,
 To th' slowly ebbing Sluices of the Heart.
 But, as a Snuff, just ready to expire,
 For want of Oyl, to feed the fading Fire,
 Sink in the Socket, and from Life retire.

Forgive me, Sir, that freely I advise;
 Withdraw your Suit; you're Happy if you're
 Far in the Country let us both Retreat, [Wife.
 Avoiding all that's Beautiful, or Great,
 And share the Blessings of a Rural State.

Unsea-

Unseasonable Love, in Time, forego,
 Nor languish out declining Life in Wee,
 Which, if you Marry, now, you'll surely do.
 Would such a Pilot of his Judgment boast,
 Who splits upon the Rock his Friend was lost?
 Oh! condescend to be advis'd by me,
 Remember *Malchos*, *Licidas*, and see
 Where the best Prospects of true Pleasures be.
 Let Youth, to Youth, in sacred Bands, be join'd,
 As 'twas, at first, by *Jove* himself, design'd.

Now pardon that I, once again, intreat
 You'll strait repair to your Paternal Seat,
 All Thoughts of Love, leave, to the Young, and
 Brighten, as Age comes on, dim Reason's Ray.

[Gay:
 And share the Blessings of a Rural State.
 Unless-
 By

By useful Studies cultivate the Mind,
And form your Thoughts to better all Mankind.
That so, when you, for all your Vertues past,
Are call'd to Heav'n, for your Reward at last;
And these fond Eyes shall bid a sad Adieu,
To all which, then, shall Mortal prove, of you;
The Subject may inspire my softest Lays,
In mournful Verse, to celebrate your Praise.

F I N I S.

And form your Thoughts to better all Mankind;
That so, when you, for all your Virtues try,
Are call'd to Heav'n, for your Reward at last;
And these fond Eyes shall bid a last Adieu,
To all which, then, shall Mortal prove, or you;
The Subject may inspire my lostest Lay,
In mortal Verse, to celebrate your Fame.

F I N I S

